



Norman H. Bangarter  
Governor  
Dee C. Hansen  
Executive Director  
Dianne R. Nielson, Ph.D.  
Division Director

# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

355 West North Temple  
3 Triad Center, Suite 350  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203  
801-538-5340

August 26, 1988

Mr. Thomas G. Wardell  
Chairman  
County Building  
152 East 100 North  
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Mr. Wardell:

Re: Tentative Approval, Notice of Intention to Commence Large Mining Operations, Asphalt Ridge, Uintah County, M/047/022, Uintah County, Utah

We apologize for the delay in responding to your Mining and Reclamation plan permit application, submitted to the Division on May 9, 1988. We are interested in getting you an approved permit as rapidly as we are able.

We have completed our review of your plan and do, at this time, grant a tentative approval. Your plan, as a whole, is thorough and well organized. We would, however, ask that you make the following changes before final approval is granted:

Page 30 - Reclamation Plan, Soils:

During our site inspection, on June 14, 1988, we noticed that area R-2 was composed mostly of a gray earthen material with little evidence of volunteer vegetation. We would expect similar areas on site, to be difficult to revegetate. The color of the material is probably the greatest limiting factor due to the higher soil temperatures that will be generated during summer months. Any type of alternate material would no doubt work better than the dark material.

We recommend that this section be rewritten to incorporate language committing the operator to the borrowing of topsoil material or substitute material to cover overburden material that is dark or gray in color.

An alternative to bringing in substitute material would be to mulch the area with 4,000 lbs/ acre of native hay. The mulch is applied by spreading it evenly over the ground. After spreading, it should be crimped into the substrate material by discing or other device that will track the hay into the ground.



Page 31 and 32 - Reclamation Plan, Seed Mixtures:

We recommend that you change, slightly, the three seed mixtures that you have proposed. We propose that you increase the number of species to be seeded and thereby the seeding rate. The addition of these species will increase the probability of initial revegetation success and add variety to the resulting vegetative community. A varied vegetative community will improve the food source and habitat for wildlife, and ensure long term vegetative success and erosion control. We suggest the following seed mixtures:

<u>Seed Mixture #1</u>	<u>Pure Live Seed/lb</u>
Grass:	
Thickspike Wheatgrass	3
Streambank Wheatgrass	3
Crested Wheatgrass	2
Russian Wildrye	3
Forbs:	
Cicer Milkvetch	1
Yellow Sweet Clover	1
	Total =16 lbs
 <u>Seed Mixture #2</u>	 <u>Pure Live Seed/lb</u>
Grasses:	
Crested Wheatgrass	2
Thickspike Wheatgrass	3
Indian Ricegrass	3
Russian Wildrye	3
Forbs:	
Cicer Milkvetch	1
Yellow Sweet Clover	1
	Total =13 lbs
 <u>Seed Mixture #3</u>	
Shrubs:	
Four Wing Saltbrush	3
Winterfat	2
Rabbitbrush	.75
	Total =5.75 lbs



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Page 33 - Reclamation Plan, R-2:

We recommend that the area R-2 be graded to a more rolling topography, and that it be retopsoiled (with substitute topsoil material) prior to seeding. At a minimum, the sediment pond at the base of R-2 should be adequately sized to contain the projected runoff volume from a 10yr-24hr storm event. Runoff should be channeled gradually into the pond.

Page 35 - Reclamation Plan, R-3:

The plan lists two slope options for the regrading of the overburden in the R-3 area. The more gradual 3H/1V option is a much more preferable configuration than the 2H/1V. With 3H/1V slopes, revegetation success will be greater as will the reduction of erosion potential.

Page 38 - Reclamation Plan, Area R-5, pits:

Upon cessation of mining operations, Uintah County proposes to construct a berm near the southern boundary of the mined out pit area. This plan is intended to keep disturbed area runoff from affecting Asphalt Ridge Operating Company's (AROC) adjacent mining operation. This proposal is acceptable only as a temporary solution to control surface runoff from this portion of the mine site.

Upon final reclamation, Uintah County, AROC and/or other responsible parties, must reestablish a stable surface drainage configuration for the pit areas that will, to the extent practicable, blend into and conform with the surrounding topographic constraints. The Division suggests that the county and AROC work out a reasonable proposal before this mining application is approved. Otherwise, this requirement will be a condition to our approval of the mining application and ultimate release of both operator's final reclamation obligations.

Page 13 & 14 - Requests for Variance, M-10(3) Impoundments, M-10(5) Highwalls, M-10(8) Roads & Pads, M-10(14) Soils:

The Division hereby grants the variance requests under the provisions as outlined in the application and according to the following conditions:

The variance request M-10(14) will be limited to those areas previously disturbed and to outcrops and excessively steep terrain where removal would be impractical. Areas yet undisturbed by the mining operation will not be covered by this variance.



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The variance request on page 14, regarding relief from bonding will be partially granted. The Board of Oil, Gas, and Mining advised the Division staff, on August 25, 1988, that Uintah County will be allowed to self-bond. In other words, a Board Contract can be made between Uintah County and the Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining instead of posting a reclamation bond. Uintah County must fill out two forms, a Board Contract and a Reclamation Agreement. I have enclosed two draft copies of these forms for your information. The forms have not yet been finalized. When they are, I will send the final version to you.

Page 23 - Mining Plan, Alternative #2 & #3:

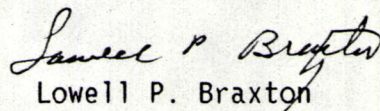
The proposed core drill holes may need to be processed under a separate notice of intention to commence exploration. This is not necessary if the exploration is conducted as developmental drilling which is approved as part of the original Notice of Intention to Commence Large Mining Operations (see attached information, under Rule R613-1M-3(5), Exploration). If the core drilling results prove favorable, then the original application must be amended to include the appropriate alternative mining proposal.

We will be able to consider granting a final approval of this application, after a 30 day public comment period, and under the following conditions: 1) no adverse comments are received regarding this application and the development of this site, 2) the Board of Oil, Gas, and Mining concurs that the form and amount of surety is sufficient, 3) the Division finds that the above outlined concerns and recommendations have been responded to adequately.

The Division will now publish a notice with a newspaper in your locality outlining the specifics of your operation and this tentative approval.

Please contact Holland Shepherd should you have further questions concerning this document or the pending final approval.

Sincerely,



Lowell P. Braxton  
Administrator  
Mineral Resource and  
Reclamation Program

HWS/jb  
enclosures  
cc: J. Barnes, WEMBCO  
AROC  
Uintah Basin Association  
of Governments  
W. Hedberg  
H. Shepherd

5/8-11